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SUBJECT: SYG BAN DOES LITTLE TO EASE COUNCIL FRUSTRATION ON  
DARFUR

REF: SECSTATE 14650

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1. (SBU) SUMMARY. In his first appearance at a closed Security Council (SC) consultation, United Nations (UN) Secretary-General (SYG) Ban Ki-moon on February 6 said little

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to assuage Members' frustration with the slow pace of progress on Darfur. He reported that African Union (AU) Commission Chair Konare would visit New York in the coming weeks, a visit designed to address outstanding issues on the eventual hybrid force in Darfur, including appointment of a joint UN-AU Special Representative, Deputy Special Representative and Force Commander (FC). Ban was hopeful that a February 11-17 visit of UN Special Envoy Eliasson and AU Special Envoy Salim to Sudan would spark political progress between the Government of National Unity (GNU) and the non-signatories to the Darfur Peace Agreement (DPA). On peacekeeping in Chad and Central African Republic (CAR), Ban reported that both President Deby and President Bozize had requested immediate deployment of a UN peacekeeping operation to stabilize the border regions with Sudan. At a P-5 meeting following Ban's briefing, UKUN reiterated its push for sanctions against the GNU as a way for the Council to gird against charges of inactivity in the face of a deteriorating security situation in Darfur. END SUMMARY.

BAN'S "DIFFICULT" MEETINGS WITH BASHIR, KONARE

2. (SBU) In his first appearance at SC consultations, UN SYG Ban Ki-moon on February 6 detailed his participation in the January 29-30 AU Summit in Addis Ababa. The majority of his briefing focused on the situation in Darfur, which Ban said was experiencing "critical developments" in need of a strong political response. Ban said his meeting with Sudanese President Bashir had been "difficult," with Bashir taking the defensive when Ban pushed him for clarity on humanitarian access, cessation of aerial bombardments and adherence to the ceasefire, and deployment of the hybrid force. Ban warned Bashir that without resolution of these issues, no SC funding would be forthcoming. Ban was reassured that Bashir agreed to continue consultations on political reconciliation and on hybrid modalities, culminating in Bashir's acceptance of the February 11-17 visit of Special Envoys Eliasson and Salim to

Khartoum and Darfur, where they planned to meet with GNU officials and with DPA non-signatories. Department of Peacekeeping Operations Under-SYG Guehenno added that the Envoys' visit and peacekeeping plans were "mutually reinforcing" and needed to happen concurrently for there to be progress in Darfur.

13. (SBU) Ban reported that Bashir downplayed the gravity of the security situation on the ground in Darfur and asserted his right to classify National Redemption Front (NRF) rebels as "legitimate military targets," despite Bashir's stated "commitment" to the ceasefire. According to Ban, Bashir was annoyed that the international community had not addressed the NRF and its aspirations of regime change in Khartoum; Bashir told Ban he had no plans to sign a ceasefire with that group. Regarding UN involvement in Darfur peacekeeping, Ban said that Bashir still insists on referring to the eventual hybrid as an "operation," vice a "force"; on appointing only African leadership for the hybrid (to be done only by the AU); on authorizing the hybrid under a new SC resolution based on Chapter VIII of the UN Charter; and on relegating UN involvement in the hybrid to only provision of technical expertise and financing. Ban said the UN would consider appointment of an African FC but warned that non-African troops were a likely reality given the constraints on force generation, but said his arguments fell on deaf ears.

14. (SBU) On the heavy support package (HSP), Bashir told Ban he had received the SYG's letter about the HSP only days before the opening of the AU Summit and had not had time to study it. Clear GNU agreement on the HSP would pave the way for hybrid deployment and for commitments by troops contributors, explained Ban. Ban announced that the HSP price tag would be approximately \$194 million. Ban reported that AU Commission Chair Konare would visit New York in the coming weeks, a visit designed to address outstanding issues on the hybrid force in Darfur, including appointment of a joint UN-AU Special Representative, Deputy Special

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Representative and FC. Ban noted that he and Konare had "different ideas" regarding the appointment of a Special Representative; Konare had apparently refused names proposed by Ban, and Konare's proposed candidate would require "further consultation." Once hybrid modalities were finalized, Ban said a follow-up letter would be sent to Bashir for his confirmation.

RELATIVELY BETTER NEWS ON CHAD/CAR

15. (SBU) On peacekeeping in Chad and CAR, Ban reported that both Chadian President Deby and CAR President Bozize had welcomed the resumed work of the UN Technical Assessment Mission and had requested immediate deployment of a UN peacekeeping operation to stabilize the border regions with Sudan. Both Presidents accused Sudan of supporting rebels in their respective territories, with Deby blaming the UN for "too much talk and no action" on this subject. Ban pointed out that Deby made no mention of a need for political dialogue in Chad, and Guehenno added such dialogue was necessary for the success of an eventual peacekeeping operation there. Speaking on behalf of the new AU Presidency, the Ghanaian representative acknowledged the gravity of deteriorating Chad-Sudan relations and said the AU Peace and Security Council was preparing recommendations to President Kufuor on this topic.

MEMBERS FRUSTRATED WITH SLOW PACE OF DARFUR PROGRESS

16. (SBU) All Members sought from SYG Ban a timetable for deployment of peacekeeping forces in Darfur and demanded to know what the SC could do in the near future to expedite the process. Congolese PermRep Ikouebe reiterated his warning that the AU Mission in Sudan (AMIS) forces would withdraw from Darfur June 30 and that the SC needed to plan accordingly. Drawing from reftel points, Ambassador Wolff

urged concerted international pressure on President Bashir to implement the Addis Ababa and Abuja Agreements and increased AU-UN cooperation. Wolff argued that Bashir's December 23 letter to former SYG Annan indicated his support for the HSP and that time should not be wasted in waiting for his response to Ban's and Konare's January 24 letter. Finally, Wolff expressed U.S. willingness to assist in encouraging troop contributor commitments. The UK representative warned that sanctions would have to be considered if hybrid and funding arrangements could not be expeditiously agreed.

¶17. (SBU) Chinese PermRep Wang described Chinese President Hu's recent trip to Sudan during which Hu reportedly admonished Bashir to embrace the "positive elements" of Annan's three-phase peacekeeping plan, to honor GNU commitments in achieving a viable ceasefire and expediting discussions with DPA non-signatories, and to improve the humanitarian situation in Darfur and repair relations with Sudan's neighbors. Wang asserted that Bashir had agreed, at least "in principle," to uphold these commitments. Wang confirmed that China had given Sudan 40 million RMB (approximately \$5 million USD) in assistance as announced during Hu's trip.

#### P-5 COORDINATORS MEETING AFTER CONSULTATIONS

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¶18. (SBU) At a meeting following Ban's briefing, P5 political coordinators discussed the SYG's downbeat assessment of his talks with President Bashir. USUN PolMinCouns made the point that Ban's difficult meeting in Addis raised renewed concern because patience for further accommodating Bashir had all but run out in several of our capitals. The U.S. Congress, the Administration, and a wide variety of pressure groups wanted to see an immediate improvement of the humanitarian situation on the ground, which would require swift action to deploy an effective AU-UN force. The international community seemed to be entering yet another round of explaining and justifying the three-phase plan for a UN-AU deployment in Darfur with a government that inspired no confidence in its own commitment to protect civilians or put an end to conflict.

¶19. (SBU) UKUN Coordinator thanked the Chinese for their detailed briefing on meetings between Presidents Hu and Bashir, but he added that the tenor of Sudanese responses to

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repeated demarches on Darfur, including those of Hu, suggested continued deep - and unjustified - suspicion of the UN and the international community. Some analysts even believed that the current conflict and chaos in Darfur actually served to reinforce the position of the regime against its internal rivals. This did not suggest that quick action on deployment would be forthcoming, declared the UK representative. If faced with continued Sudanese stonewalling and intransigence, the Council had to be ready to consider the tools at its disposal, including targeted sanctions.

¶110. (SBU) Chinese Coordinator Li refused to see the situation in such dark terms, although he admitted that deployment had been unduly delayed because the Sudanese were faced with internal divisions on Darfur and because Bashir had to accommodate political rivals regarding the AU-UN force. Li insisted that there were also differences of opinion about how dire the humanitarian situation in Darfur was, with the GNU expressing a view at variance with that of humanitarian groups. The French Coordinator pointed out that even the polite SYG Ban did not hesitate to firmly contradict the spurious claims of humanitarian improvements in Darfur made by Bashir. The Chinese Coordinator expressed understanding for the frustration heard around the table but counseled patience in dealing with the Sudanese, who were "difficult by nature." All P5 agreed that the time had come to move forward with the phase two HSP and that this staged deployment would test the sincerity of Sudanese claims that they fully supported the first two phases of the Annan plan.

Chinese Coordinator Li pleaded for the rest of the P5 to focus on phase two deployment for the moment so as not to delay it with "theological discussions" about the phase three hybrid AU-UN force.

WOLFF